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GEO. D. PRENTICE, Editor.
PAUL HENDERSON, Editor.
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MONDAY, MAY 12, 1862

**The Last of the Merrimac—Norfolk
Navy-Yard and Portsmouth—Victory
upon Victory!**

The following is a copy of a private despatch received yesterday from a well-known and highly respectable citizen now at Washington:

WASHINGTON, May 11.

Norfolk Navy-Yard in our possession, and the Merrimac blown up by the rebels.

We presume that this will be confirmed by the despatched our third page. It is indeed great news. We have now all the important cities in the Rebel Confederacy, except Richmond, Mobile, and Charleston, and these are not a fourth part as important as some that we have taken. They will all be ours in a few days beyond question. Yes, everything will be ours that is worth the taking. Our gunboats can go up James River to Richmond as soon as they please. The rebel capital is at our mercy. Except at Corinth, formidable resistance seems to be at an end.

The capture of the Norfolk Navy-Yard is an event of great interest. It is the rebels have been building their gunboats, all of which, if not destroyed by the enemy, have of course fallen into our hands. The Yard, when taken possession of by the rebels, contained about 2,500 heavy cannon, and, although many of these have been taken to other points for use and others perhaps destroyed, it is probable that a fraction remains, a prize to our gallant army and navy.

The destruction of the Merrimac will thrill every true heart with joy. This relieves the Monitor, the Galena, the Dacota, the Naugatuck, and the rest of our iron-plate ships from their guard, and they can pass any of the rebel fortifications, and go straight into any rebel port unharmed, compelling an immediate surren-

der.

Most heartily do we congratulate the nation upon the glorious progress of events. With all the great cities of the South in our possession, where can the rebels expect to find resources for carrying on the war? What but insanity can prompt them to prosecute it further?

THE UNION CONVENTION AT NASHVILLE. The object of this convention, which meets to-day, is to set on foot measures for the restoration of the former relations of Tennessee to the Federal Union, or, in other words, for the reconstruction of the lawless government of the state, which has been overthrown and swept away by revolutionary power. The convention is called by the first citizens of the State, including Andrew Johnson, Bainbridge, Wm. A. Campbell, Jordan Stokes, Allen A. Hall, and others, whose names we give at length in the next page. There is every reason to believe that the high object for which the body is called and of the distinguished patriots and statesmen who have called it.

As the object of the convention is to restore the old and legitimate order of things in Tennessee, it may not be inappropriate to reproduce in our columns this morning from the Tennessee authority a certain very striking exhibition of the illegitimacy of the new order of things which we happen to have at hand. We especially ask disloyal Tennesseans to attend the exhibition. The Nashville Banner of the 10th of April in 1861, a few numbers preceding that in which under the sorcery of revolutionary terrorism the Banner itself apostatized to secession, contained a well-considered and very elaborate article entitled "THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CONVENTIONS—THEORY OF SECESSIONISTS," in which the doctrine of the power of a state convention or of the people of a state in any form to abrogate the relations of the state to the Union was denied and confuted in most indignant terms. The assumed abrogation was shown clearly to be a nullity in law and a despotism in fact. "Such," said the Banner, after a faithful abstract of the principles of American liberty, "is a brief digest of the system of constitutional rights and constitutional liberty established by the people of the days of Washington, Madison, Jefferson, and the other fathers of the Republic, State and Federal, as sovereign, and transmitted to the people of this generation for them to maintain and enjoy, or for them to destroy, taking all the risks of its destruction. The events of the times require that all who love liberty and desire to discharge their duty as men and citizens, by transmitting this inheritance of constitutional rights and liberty to their children, should carefully and diligently study that system, and read, consider and decide upon these events by the light afforded them by the principles of that system. There has, in the revolutionary Cotton States, arisen a faction of selfish, unscrupulous, ambitious and disappointed office-holders and office-seekers, which has usurped the sovereignty of the people of those States, and under the guise of that sovereignty, precipitated the people of those States into revolution and out of the Union. The mode in which that faction attained that end was to be a solemn and impressive lesson to the people of Tennessee. The people of those States were a paroxysm of passion and excitement, produced by the election of a sectional President upon a sectional issue, and were induced by the appeals of that faction to their sectional feelings and sense of sectional injury, to elect members to conventions in those States. That faction assumed that those conventions embodied the sovereignty of the people of each of those States, and possessed, as the embodiment of such sovereignty, imperial and unlimited power, and though the votes of the majority of the people of at least two of those States were cast against immediate secession and for Union and co-operation, and though many thousands of voters in some of the others had not, in the elections for the conventions, cast their votes at all, yet that faction further assumed that, as the immediate embodiment or representation of those conventions of the sovereignty of the people, it had the right and the power, by its own ordinances, to dissolve the connection of those States with the Government of the Federal Union and with the other States, and through a Congress elected by itself in such convention, to establish a provisional government for the people of those States, and exercise all the powers of the government over them, and to adopt a constitution for the permanent government of the people of those States. The principal upon which that theory and that

practices are grounded is that a convention elected by the people of a State embodies the sovereignty of the people of such State, and is as the embodiment of such sovereignty, vested with imperial and uncontrollable power. This idea is simply the reduction and the application to the sovereignty of a convention elected by the people of a State, of the principle of the despotism of the old world. That principle is that the King or Emperor is imperial, absolute, unlimited and uncontrollable."

The Banner then proceeded at great length to illustrate this position by apposite historical citations, and concluded by vigorously pressing the lesson home upon the Tennesseans. "The most dangerous and pernicious doctrine ever advanced in England," said the Banner in conclusion, "was that of the absolute, unlimited, uncontrollable and imperial sovereignty of her Kings. Its assertion and exercise for a time delayed the fair fields of England in blood, and justly cost Charles the Second his head. Its reassertion and attempted exercise in a modified form cost his son, James the Second, his throne, and changed the line of succession to the crown. The doctrine of the absolute, unlimited, uncontrollable and imperial sovereignty of a convention must be equally pernicious and dangerous in this country. It is incompatible with the security of life, liberty and property. For such a convention, if possessed of such absolute, unlimited, uncontrollable and imperial sovereignty, can, by an ordinance or ordinance, confiscate any part or all of the property of the people, take from them all their rights and liberties, and deprive as many of them as it chooses of their lives, as readily as it can set aside annual or disregard constitutions, State and Federal, by which the lives, liberty and property of the people are guaranteed, secured, and guarded. There are no restraints upon its alleged sovereignty other than our own conscience."

The world has held on instance of the absolute, unlimited, uncontrollable and imperial sovereignty of a convention as that of the House of Commons, and the rebellion called the Merrimac "the Virginia." We wonder whether her namesake is ambitious of sharing her fate.

Jeff Davis has appointed a fast day. If fast days are days when fast runs are made, the rebel Confederacy has more of them than any other people ever had.

The rebel Congress is taunted by its own organs with having adjourned for the sole purpose of enabling its members to secure their personal safety by flight.

If the leaders of the rebellion had any actual regard for the people of the South, peace would in one month be restored.

Jeff Davis has appointed a day of humiliation and prayer. Let President Lincoln appoint a day of Thanksgiving.

It seems that Jeff Davis's coachman has run away from him. Well, Gen. McClellan can drive him.

Our troops are making rapid advances to the South, but the Union sentiment greatly outstrips them.

The Yankees, it is said, used to chase the "almighty dollar," but not half so hotly as they are now chasing the rebels.

The rebels respect nothing but power. Therefore we are trying that upon them.

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He is a good boy.

